

WASHINGTON – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) warned that a rule proposed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) could impose heavy costs on farmers in Alabama.

Bachus has written to EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson to express concern over the impact that a proposed regulation governing greenhouse gas emissions would have on small farming operations. Farms with more than 25 dairy cows, 50 beef cattle, or 200 hogs would be subjected to a costly and burdensome mandate to reduce naturally occurring agricultural emissions under the Clean Air Act.

“Small farmers in my district have to work very hard to just make ends meet. They can’t afford costly new regulations from Washington, especially during these challenging economic times. As I told the EPA, we have to be careful not to take any action that could further strain the financial well-being of the farming families that are the backbone of our rural communities here in Alabama,” Bachus said.

The EPA rule would apply to all farming operations that produce more than 100 tons a year of naturally occurring agriculture emissions. According to the Department of Agriculture, 99 percent of dairy production, more than 90 percent of beef production, and more than 95 percent of hog

production would be forced to comply with an expensive permitting process.

The proposed rule has been put out for public comment. The agency has not set a date for finalizing the regulation.

A copy of the December 12 letter from Congressman Bachus follows.

December 12, 2008

The Honorable Stephen Johnson

Administrator

Environmental Protection Agency

1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20460-0001

Dear Administrator Johnson,

Please accept this letter expressing my concern with the Environmental Protection Agency's
(EPA) Advance
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
"

Regulating
Greenhouse Gas Emissions
under the
Clean Air Act.
"

The unintended
consequences of
this
action could
have
a considerable

impact
on
the
agricultural economy
in m
y
home
state of Alabama and
the nation
as a whole.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has stated that any operation with more than 25 dairy
cows , 50
beef
cattle
,
or
200
hogs
emits
the
equivalent of
more than 100 tons
o
f
carbon
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Under
the
EPA
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s

p
roposed rule
,
small farming operations
that produce more than 100 tons-per-year
of

naturally
occurring agriculture emissions would
be
subject
to the costly
,
burdensome
Clean Air Act's Title
V permitting process in
order
to
continu
e
to operate.

According
to
USDA statistics

,
this
would
cover
about 99
percent
of
dairy production

,
more than
90
percent
of
beef production

,
and
more than
95
percent
of all
hog production in the
United States.

If
the proposed rule
were
to
go

in to
effect

,
the
consequences
on
Alabama farmers would
be disastrous.

Not only would
these
fees
negatively impact
small farmers
throughout
Alabama

,
this
rule would result
in higher
costs
for
consumers
around the
country
reliant on the
products
produced on
Alabama farms

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It is my request that you reexamine the approach outlined in the proposed rule and consider the
economic and agricultural
impact that could result.

Thank you for your consideration

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If

you
have any questions
,
please
feel free
to
contact
Jennifer Pino in my
office at (202) 225-4921.

Sincerely,

Spencer Bachus

Member of Congress